

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An exemplary method and apparatus provide improved dormant handoff of mobile stations having multiple packet data service instances. Each time a dormant IS-2000 mobile station undergoes a packet data mobility event it sends a dormant handoff request to the supporting network for each packet data service instance associated with it. If the mobile station does not have a traffic channel already assigned to it, each dormant handoff request are sent over common access channels. By recognizing that a given mobile station is re-registering multiple service instances for the same mobility event, the network can avoid excess common channel signaling by assigning a traffic channel to the mobile station responsive to receiving the dormant handoff request for its first service instance. Such an assignment causes the mobile station to send dormant handoff requests for any remaining service instances over the assigned traffic channel rather than over the common access channel.